

NEGOTIATING THE BORDER IN SONG CHINA:
FOREIGN POLICY, BORDER MANAGEMENT, AND BORDER-CROSSINGS,
1005-1122

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THESIS

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ABSTRACT

This thesis discusses the issue of foreign policy, border management, and border-crossing incidents during Song-Liao peacetime (1005-1122). It focuses on one of the earliest borderlines drawn between two great powers of northeast Asia in the eleventh century, the Liao and the Song. This thesis not only traces its origin, establishment, and maintenance, it also spotlights a specific phenomenon of border-crossing, by generals and officials as well as commoners. By focusing on these border-crossing incidents and their repercussions in government, sometimes at decision-making level, this thesis tries to portray a more detailed and accurate of the Song-Liao border, and explore the importance impact of various issues happened in borderlands to Song policies.

Based on officials records, literary collections of literati, memorials by officials, and travelogues written by envoys, this thesis addresses several questions: How was the border between the Song and the Liao established in the first place? Ever since its establishment, how did both states stabilize and maintain the border? What were the developments of previously existed diplomatic practices? What were the new developments stimulated by this freshly inaugurated border? Were the perceptions and understandings of the border the same according to different people ranging from emperors to farmers, from generals to soldiers, from people of the Song and those of the

Liao? How did the government react to intentional and unintentional border-crossings?

And what roles did those reactions play in the making of foreign policies?

This thesis demonstrates that with the signing of the Treaty of Chanyuan, a borderline that demarcated the territories of the Liao and the Song was immediately established. Various diplomatic institutions, regulations, and practices were subsequently inaugurated after the treaty was signed. These institutions and regulations, at different levels came to regulate various aspects of borderland issues such as routine administrative matters, espionage, trade, blockade of manuscripts and printed books, etc. This thesis also highlights a particular phenomenon of border-crossing incidents which offers us a chance to see how the border was actually conceived and maintained in the eleventh century. The handlings of these incidents, when occasionally radical and unconventional, caused significant reverberations both at the local and central levels. These reactions mirrored the mentalities of Song foreign policy makers when dealing with border and territory issues. They also served as a point of departure for future policy-making.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Two contradictory assumptions concerning borders are often taken for granted in the modern cartography. On the one hand, a borderline that clearly demarcates the territories of two states is generally accepted as a modern invention peculiar to the nation-states. On the other hand, cartographers, without much hesitation, use borderlines on every map to delineate territories of ancient and medieval geopolitical entities that existed long before the time they claim appropriate to use those lines.

These two assumptions have been challenged by recent scholarship on China in the eleventh century. Historians' inquiries into the Chanyuan Treaty 澶淵之盟 show that the idea of a borderline, however vaguely it may be understood, already appeared as early as the eleventh century between the Song 宋 and the Liao 遼.¹ A substantial part of the treaty was about delineating and sustaining a specific border. Similar territorial delineations, copying the pattern of the Song-Liao borderline, were also visible between the Song and the Xi Xia 西夏, and between the Song and the Jin 金. Nicolas Tackett's article on the Great Wall and conceptualization of the border astutely questions the assumption that "date the emergence of precisely demarcated borderlines, 'border

¹ Naomi Standen, *Unbounded Loyalty: Frontier Crossing in Liao China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007), 25; Tao Jinsheng 陶晉生, *Two Sons of Heaven: Studies in Sung-Liao Relations* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1988), 10-24. Tao Jinsheng, *Song Liao guanxi shi yanjiu* 宋遼關係史研究 (Taipei: Lianjing chubanshiye gongsi, 1984): 24, 101. And Ge Zhaoguang 葛兆光, *Zhai zi Zhongguo* 宅茲中國 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2011), 48-49.

consciousness', territorial sovereignty and strictly-defined notions of the 'geo-body' to post-Westphalian Europe or post-seventeenth-century Eurasia."² Yet how was this borderline constructed, understood, and maintained a thousand years ago remains a question to be answered.

Even modern states equipped with high technology and backed by massive budgets cannot afford to build a physical wall to separate the territories or segregate their peoples. Moreover, modern states are still suffering from problems like illegal immigration, smuggling, unpermitted trespassing of borders. Naturally, one may easily cast doubts on how effective an eleventh-century border could be in terms of preventing and solving these problems. For instance, in the Treaty of Chanyuan, we see agreements such as (1) both sides should repatriate fugitives, and (2) neither side should disturb the farmland and crop of the other.³ Was there any real guarantee that those terms would be implemented? Or were they merely terms on paper and hardly made any difference comparing with earlier periods? This thesis tries to recapture the actual condition of the border. More importantly, it tackles the question of how this

² Nicolas Tackett, "The Great Wall and Conceptualizations of the Border Under the Northern Song," *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies* 38 (2008): 103.

³ The complete treaty is transcribed in Li Tao 李燾, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian* 續資治通鑑長編 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985) [henceforth XCB], 1299; Two English summaries of the agreements in this treaty see Tao Jinsheng, *Two Sons of Heaven: Studies in Sung-Liao Relations*, 15. And Naomi Standen, *Unbounded Loyalty: Frontier Crossing in Liao China*, 25.

border was defined and conceived by different agents, the Song government, the Liao government, and their borderland populations.

Scholars who study the Song-Liao relation have addressed some of the issues relating to the border. One of the pioneering Song-Liao relation scholars in United States Tao Jinsheng 陶晉生, when discussing Wang Anshi's view of Song foreign policy, briefly discussed Wang's attitude towards Song-Liao border disputes that happened in 1072-1073 and 1074-1076.⁴ In a more recent collection of essays, he analyzed the 1074-1076 dispute again by looking specifically into its negotiation process.⁵ Tao has also explored the role of a particular borderland prefecture Xiongzhou 雄州 played in Song-Liao relation.⁶

One of the other pioneering works about the Song-Liao border is Naomi Standen's *Unbounded Loyalty: Frontier Crossing in Liao China*.⁷ Standen's book primarily looks at border-crossing cases in the ninth century China. Her book defines and distinguishes border-related concepts such as border, boundary, frontier, and loyalty. Several cases of border-crossing by military commanders dating from the Five Dynasties to the pre-Chanyuan era are also analyzed. Her book takes a completely political perspective and

⁴ Tao, *Two Sons of Heaven*, 68-78. See also Tao, *Song Liao guanxi shi yanjiu*, 131-167.

⁵ Tao Jinsheng, *Song Liao Jin shi luncong* 宋遼金史論叢 (Taipei: Lianjing chubun gongsi, 2013), 227-237.

⁶ Tao, *Song Liao Jin shi luncong*, 183-200.

⁷ Standen, *Unbounded Loyalty*.

argues that the border was mostly determined by individual allegiances of powerful generals during the tenth-century.

Nicolas Tackett's essay "The Great Wall and Conceptualizations of the Border under the Northern Song" is another important work that draws connection between the remains of the Great Wall and the Song-Liao border. It explores Song encounters with the wall, the use of the Great wall in demarcating the border. It also causes doubts to "tributary model" and question the dating of border lines.⁸ His study, like Standen's, also takes the political perspective and focuses on literati's conceptualization of the border.

Shiba Yoshinobu 斯波義信, in his survey about Song foreign trade, briefly covers the role of Quechang markets in Song's trade with the Liao.⁹

Some Chinese researches on the Song-Liao border pick a specific area called dual-tax-region 兩屬地 and its residents there 兩屬戶.¹⁰ Other works occasionally mention the border-related issues when discussing the impact of the Chanyuan Treaty.¹¹

⁸ Tackett, "The Great Wall under the Northern Song."

⁹ Shiba Yoshinobu, "Sung Foreign Trade: Its Scope and Organization," in Morris Rossabi, eds., *China among Equals: The Middle Kingdom and Its Neighbors, 10th-14th centuries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 89-115.

¹⁰ See An Guolou 安國樓, "Song Liao bianjing de 'liangshu hu' 宋遼邊境的'兩屬戶'," *Zhongguo shi yanjiu* 中國史研究, no.4 (1991): 149-153. See also Li Changxian 李昌憲, "Bei Song Hebei Xiongzhou de liangshu di 北宋河北雄州的兩屬地," *Nanjing daxue xuebao* 南京大學學報, no.3 (1993): 116-118.

¹¹ See Zhang Xiqing 張希清 et al., *Chanyuan zhi meng xin lun* 澶淵之盟新論 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2007). See also Lin Ronggui 林榮貴, "Bei Song yu Liao de bianjiang jinglue 北宋與遼的邊疆經略," *Zhongguo bianjiang shi di yanjiu* 中國邊疆史地研究 10, no.1 (2000):24-26.

All these studies reveal some truth about the border, but can by no means offer us a holistic picture of how the border was truly operated on a daily basis since they either splinter one certain area or prefecture from the rest of the borderlands. In addition, there can be more than one single political perspective to observe the border. This thesis intends to close these gaps by situating the Song-Liao border in the central position and studying it as the primary subject-matter. One ambition of this study is to unveil how borderland population were affected by new border institutions and practices and how they responded.

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter One provides an overview of previous scholarship on the Song-Liao border. It then points out some of the overlooked and less studied issues concerning the border. These remaining issues are the focus of this thesis. Chapter two reexamines the significance of the Chanyuan Treaty, which reshaped the geo-political structure of China in the eleventh century, with special attention to the agreements regarding the border and their immediate effects. Chapter three concentrates on new institutions and practices that maintained and stabilized the border, including the re-introduction of markets, the blockade of books, and espionage activities. Chapter four depicts a more complex picture of the eleventh century Song-Liao border by discussing a specific phenomenon of border-crossing. During the Song-Liao peacetime, numbers of border-crossing incidents were recorded. Normally, these border-crossing incidents were handled by borderland officials with careful diplomacy;

however, sometimes we also see radical and contentious actions taken that could potentially be explosive. Consequently, these actions transcend borderlands and led to discussions and debates at policy-making level. These debates not only mirrored the mentality of Song's foreign policy makers when dealing with territory issues, but also served as a point of departure for future policy-making. Chapter five is the conclusive chapter that summarizes the new findings about the Song-Liao border and its position in Song-Liao relation.

Chapter Two: The Treaty of Chanyuan and the Establishment of the Song-Liao

Border

From the tenth to thirteenth century, viewing from the geo-political perspective, the East Asian world was a highly sophisticated one. Unlike the previous Sui-Tang period in which China was more or less a vast and unified empire that dominated the area, several regimes emerged on the stage in these centuries. The Liao (Khitans), the Song, the Xi Xia (Tanguts), the Jin (Jurchens), the Goryeo (also spell as Koryŏ), the Dali 大理, and the Jiaozhi 交趾 were all vital states. Therefore, a previously wide-accepted model of tributary system in which China was the center of all civilizations was astutely disputed by scholars who specialized in these centuries. As the title of the book “China among Equals” aptly suggests, the Song was a “lesser empire” that was no longer superior to its neighbors.¹²

Actually, this is not merely the opinion of modern scholars, even Song people themselves sensed that their position with neighbors had altered dramatically. The famous scholar-official Fu Bi once mentioned in his memorials to Emperor Renzong,

Ever since the Khitans seized the north of Yan and Ji, and the Tanguts acquired the west of Ling and Xia, the talented people born there were used by them. They acquire China’s lands, mobilize Chinese human resources, assume Chinese titles, imitate Chinese institutions, employ Chinese talents, read Chinese books, use Chinese vehicles, proclaim Chinese laws; what these two

¹² Rossabi, *China among Equals*, 47-65.

enemies do are all equal to China. But their formidable military forces and intrepid generals are stronger than those of China's. What China has, they also have. And their advantages are what China lacks. We need to treat them as China's nearest rivals, and then we may barely defend ourselves. How can we treat them as barbarians in ancient times?

自契丹侵取燕、薊以北，拓跋自得靈、夏以西，其間所生豪英，皆為其用。得中國土地，役中國人力，稱中國位號，仿中國官屬，任中國賢才，讀中國書籍，用中國車服，行中國法令，是二敵所為，皆與中國等。而又勁兵驍將長於中國，中國所有，彼盡得之，彼之所長，中國不及。當以中國勁敵待之，庶幾可御，豈可以上古之夷狄待二敵也？¹³

This was the position held by some open-minded scholar-officials. Many more expressed a similar attitude privately when they discussed foreign affairs, especially when they were addressing to the Liao, with their colleagues and friends. In the sense of being “equal”, compared to other states, with the exception of the Jin, the Liao was certainly more equal than the others. Both Tao Jinsheng and David C. Wright repeatedly use the phrase “diplomatic parity” to describe the relation between the Song and the Liao. Tao Jinsheng describes the Song-Liao relation as “equal diplomatic relation”. He offers four major reasons for his view: 1) the establishment of a relationship of relatives between the monarchs and royal families of the two states; 2) the form of addressing each other as the “northern dynasty” and “southern dynasty”; 3)

¹³ XCB, 3640-3641.

equal diplomatic rituals; 4) an equal trading relation different from the tributary system.¹⁴ Wright also noted that “it is now generally recognized that Sung (A.D. 960-1279) diplomacy with Liao (915-1125) and Chin (1115-1234) was conducted on the basis of something approximating equality or diplomatic parity”; however, he followed with a caveat that “the concept of an entire international community of equally sovereign and independent states did not exist in East Asia during Sung times. Northern Sung China did not see itself as one state among many equals but as a state with only one equal: Liao.”¹⁵

An unprecedented equal relation between the Song and the Liao is the characteristic of the era. The parity was directly inaugurated by the Treaty of Chanyuan. The signing of the treaty was the foundation stone of the peacetime that lasted for more than a hundred years. The border between the Song and the Liao was an immediate production of the treaty. Before discussing the border-related treaty details, it is worthwhile that we reflect briefly on the pre-Chanyuan Song-Liao relation in order to see how borderland populations’ life changed before and after an official border was established.

¹⁴ Tao, *Song Liao guanxi shi yanjiu*, 41-42. Tao restates his opinion in his recently published collection of essays and situates the Song-Liao parity in an East Asian world that all states were seeking parity. See Tao, *Song Liao Jin shi luncong*, 91-132.

¹⁵ David C. Wright, *From War to Diplomatic Parity in Eleventh-Century China: Sung’s Foreign Relations with Khitan Liao* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 1-2.

Pre-Chanyuan Song-Liao Relation

The Liao dynasty was established much earlier than the Song dynasty. In 907, Abaoji 阿保機 became the Khagan of the Khitans. In 916, he ascended the throne and proclaimed himself as the Emperor. This year was generally accepted as the founding year of the Liao dynasty. 44 years later, Zhao Kuangyin 趙匡胤, after a coup d'état, became the first emperor of the Song dynasty. Before the coexistence of the Liao and the Song, the Khitans kept an equal position with the Liang 梁, the Tang 唐, and the Zhou 周 in the Five Dynasties. The Jin 晉 and the Han 漢 were subordinate to the Liao. Since the establishment of the Song, Emperor Taizu 太祖 and his younger brother Emperor Taizong 太宗 focused more on conquering and unifying southern China instead of confronting their northern neighbor, the mighty regime of the Khitans. There were occasional frontier harassments between the Song and the Liao, yet a relative state of peace was maintained until 979 when a war erupted between the two states. Emperor Taizong was eager to recover the sixteen prefectures in the north. These northern lands were lost to the Liao in the Five Dynasties. In order to get support from the Liao for helping him defeat the Later Tang forces, Shi Jingtang 石敬瑭, Emperor Gaozu of the Later Jin, gave away these strategically vital territories that traditionally within China proper and controlled by Han people to the Liao. Two utter defeats in 979 and 986 to

the northerners shattered Emperor Taizong's ambition.¹⁶ These lands were not recovered by Han regimes until the Ming dynasty.

Apart from military confrontations, the diplomatic relation between the Song and the Liao was commenced by borderland officials. Both the Song and the Liao claimed that it was the other side who first requested setting up a diplomatic relation.¹⁷ A letter from the Zhuozhou 涿州 prefecture magistrate Yelü Cong 耶律琮 may have initiated it,

Cong received the benevolence from our emperor, humbly served as a borderland official. If I did not establish a formal relation with the foreign nation, then my words would be inappropriate. If things can be beneficial to one's nation, it is good to act with authorization. I reflect that the south and the north was similar in the past and at the present. When have we not enjoyed a happy alliance, and exchanged presents? In the past, the monarch of the Later Jin was weak, confused by strong officials, and forgot the great righteousness. weapons have been used on daily basis, human lives hence suffered disasters. Now our two states have no previous quarrels. If either side sends out an envoy to convey the intentions of the two emperors, to rest our tired people, to rebuild a friendly relation, to be long lasting allies. Is that not wonderful!

琮濫受君恩，猥當邊任。臣無交於境外，言則非宜；事有利於國家，專之亦可。切思南北兩地，古今所同，曷常不世載歡盟，時通贊幣。往者晉氏後主，政出多門，惑彼強臣，忘我大義。干戈以之日用，生靈於是罹災。今茲兩朝，本無纖

¹⁶ A thorough scrutiny of the Song-Liao war see Zeng Ruilong 曾瑞龍, *Jinglüe You Yan: Song Liao zhanzheng junshi zainan de zhanlüe fenxi* 經略幽燕: 宋遼戰爭軍事災難的戰略分析 (Hong Kong: Zhongwen daxue chubanshe, 2003).

¹⁷ Tao, *Song Liao guanxi shi yanjiu*, 19-20.

隙。若或交馳一介之使，顯布二君之心，用息疲民，重修舊好，長為與國，不亦休哉!¹⁸

For the following several years, both the Song and the Liao sent out envoys to convey good wishes on festivals, express condolence upon the death of an emperor, empress, or empress dowager, or to inform and congratulate on a new emperor's accession. However, these friendly diplomatic gestures were interrupted by the military campaigns launched by Emperor Taizong in 979. A formal diplomatic relation was not restored until the Treaty of Chanyuan.

Trade between the Song and the Liao did not resemble their diplomatic relation. Unlike warfare that interrupted formal diplomatic relation, trade continued even when the Song and the Liao were in the state of war. Formal trade, rather than smuggling which bound to be happening all the time, regulated by government and conducted in markets that located in Zhenzhou 鎮州, Yizhou 易州, Xiongzhou 雄州, Bazhou 霸州, and Cangzhou 滄州 five prefectures started from 977.¹⁹ After 979 the war broke out, five trades continued intermittently.²⁰ Government regulated trade conducted in Quechang 榷場 markets, like diplomatic relations, need to wait the Chanyuan treaty for its re-establishment.

¹⁸ Xu Song 徐松 eds., *Song huiyao jigao* 宋會要輯稿 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2014) [henceforth SHYJG], 9711.

¹⁹ XCB, 402.

²⁰ Tao, *Song Liao guanxi shi yanjiu*, 22.

Border relations in pre-Chanyuan era went through several stages. These stages are by no means exclusive but highly overlapping. Naomi Standen's pioneering book *Unbounded Loyalty: Frontier Crossing in Liao China* studies the Liao border from the early tenth century to early eleventh century, with an emphasis on the first half of the tenth century since most of the figures who crossed the frontier were active in the Five Dynasties period. It argues that "in the opening decades of the tenth century the existence of multiple political centers in our frontier zone favored a highly pragmatic approach to borders and loyalty", "borders between regimes in the frontier zone were determined largely by the shifting and contingent allegiances of individual commanders and regional officials."²¹ It was allegiances that defined the border rather than the other way around.

However, this gradually changed with the re-unification of southern China by the Song so that a multistate system was replaced by a dual-state situation. More importantly, the Treaty of Chanyuan nailed the coffin of the previously less morally condemned side-changings which were ubiquitous in the Five Dynasties and early Song dynasty. Numerous records show that in the 970s, it was common for both sides (more records from the Song side due to extant sources) to accept fugitives, both commoners as well as people with posts like generals, officials, and soldiers who surrendered.²² On

²¹ Naomi Standen, *Unbounded Loyalty*, 172.

²² SHYJG, 9713-9716.

the contrary, the handling of these fugitives altered drastically ever since the beginning of 1000s due to the Treaty of Chanyuan. Although the concept of a “border” always existed between states since there needs to be a territorial distinction between one regime and another, the connotation and function of the border had changed significantly. The pivotal turning point was the Treaty of Chanyuan, which I shall discussed in the next section and its influence on border in the following chapters.

The Treaty of Chanyuan

In 1004, eighteen years after their victory over the Song, the Liao launched a massive invasion led by the Empress Dowager Xiao 蕭太后 and Emperor Shengzong 遼聖宗 Yelü Longxu 耶律隆緒. Their troops were said to be 200,000 strong. The troops swiftly penetrated Song territories and reached the outskirts of Chanyuan 澶淵 (Chanzhou 澶州, modern Puyang 濮陽), which was close to the Song capital Kaifeng 開封. Due to the immediate threat posed by the Liao forces, most officials suggested Emperor Zhenzong 宋真宗 to move the capital since it was a city without natural barriers hence hard to defend; however, under the strong persuasion by Kou Zhun 寇準, the emperor made a brave move to lead his army against the Liao himself. Encouraged by the presence of the Emperor and the killing of Liao commander Xiao Talin 蕭撻凜 by a crossbow shot, the morale of Song troops was significantly lifted. A decisive battle was on the verge of breaking out, however, both sides had reasons to avoid such a

battle.²³ An agreement was achieved due to the mediation of Wang Jizhong 王繼忠, a previous Song general who surrendered to the Liao and gained trust from the Emperor, and the negotiation by Cao Liyong 曹利用. The agreements were then turned into an affidavit which later known as the Treaty of Chanyuan. The complete treaty was preserved in Li Tao 李燾's *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian* and given below in translation by David C. Wright:

On this the seventh, or ping-hsü day of the first half of the twelfth, or keng-ch'en month of the inaugural year of the Ching-te reign period, the Emperor of Great Sung respectfully transmits [this] oath deposition to His Majesty the Emperor of the Khitan:

To abide together in sincere good faith and reverently uphold a joyous oath, of the resources had in natural abundance [in the Sung realm], 200,000 bolts of raw silk and 100,000 taels of silver [shall be forwarded] annually to assist with [Khitan] military expenditures. Moreover, envoys shall not be dispatched with the special duty of proceeding to the Northern Court [with these items]; the State Finance Commission shall simply be directed to dispatch personnel to transport [them] to Hsiung-Chou for delivery and dispensation.

The civilian and military prefectures along the border shall each abide by the [present] territorial boundaries. The residents and households of the two realms shall not encroach on one another.

If there are robbers or bandits who flee arrest, neither side shall allow them to be give refuge.

²³ Many studies have discussed the pros and cons of continuing or not continuing the war. The most recent ones see three essays in Zhang, *Chanyuan zhi meng xinlun*, 1-12, 30-36, and 45-48. See also Yu Wei 余蔚, *Song Shi* 宋史 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe), 39-41.

As for furrowed fields and sowing and reaping, neither the North nor the South shall grant [their populations] license to harass or disturb.

All walls and moats now in existence on either side may be kept and maintained as of old, with the dredging of moats and completion of repairs all as before, but it shall not be permissible to initiate construction on [new] walls and moats or open or dig [new] river channels.

Neither side shall make requests outside [this] oath deposition. We must work together so that [this oath] can endure far and long. Henceforth we shall preserve the peace for the worthies among the common people and carefully maintain the boundaries. This we pledge before the deities of heaven and earth and declare at the ancestral temples and to the spirits of the land and grain. [May] our posterity abide [by this oath] and transmit it in perpetuity.

Whosoever shall repudiate this oath shall be unable to enjoy the reign over [his] state, [for this oath is] clearly manifested [to all] and scrutinized by Heaven, which along with [the offended state] shall surely destroy him.

From a distance I have prepared [this document now] opened and spread [before you]. With singleness [of heart] I await your reply. I say no more.²⁴

維景德元年，歲次甲辰，十二月庚辰朔、七日丙戌，大宋皇帝謹致誓書於大契丹皇帝闕下：共遵成信，虔奉歡盟，以風土之宜，助軍旅之費，每歲以絹二十萬匹、銀一十萬兩，更不差使臣專往北朝，只令三司差人般送至雄州交割。沿邊州軍，各守疆界，兩地人戶，不得交侵。或有盜賊逋逃，彼此無令停匿。至於隴畝稼穡，南北勿縱驚騷。所有兩朝城池，並可依舊存守，洶壕完葺，一切如常，即不得創築城隍，開拔河道。誓書之外，各無所求。必務協同，庶存悠久。自此保

²⁴ Wright, *From War to Diplomatic Parity*, 74-75.

安黎獻，慎守封陲，質於天地神祇，告於宗廟社稷，子孫共守，傳之無窮，有渝此盟，不克享國。昭昭天監，當共殛之。遠具披陳，專俟報復，不宣，謹白。²⁵

The number of essays and monographs on the Treaty of Chanyuan, according to some estimates, has reached almost 200.²⁶ These studies approach the treaty from various perspectives. Some pay more attention to the military confrontations happened before the treaty was signed. Others study the process of peace negotiation, focus on the questions like which side first prompted up with the idea of negotiation instead of a decisive battle, or who were the key figures to make the negotiation possible. Other than pre-treaty activities, numerous researches touch on the impact and influence of the annual payment on the Song, the Liao, and future foreign relations. The border itself seems to be an understudied subject.

The Establishment of the Song-Liao Border

If we look at the treaty again, apart from the rituals and formalities, the main body of the treaty can be divided into two parts. One is about the annual payment that the Song is obliged to deliver. The other is about drawing borderlines and territorial demarcations. As for the second part, the treaty (1) formally established and consolidated a border that demarcated the territories of the two states; (2) regulated that

²⁵ XCB, 1299.

²⁶ See the catalog in Zhang, *Chanyuan zhi meng xinlun*, 452-467.

it was each side's duty to repatriate fugitives; (3) prohibited the disturbance of farmland; (4) forbade new constructions of fortifications and canals other than the ones that already existed. Just as many other rules made in pre-modern societies, in theory, they were perfectly designed; however, due to various reasons, in practice they were not effective as they appeared on paper. As we shall see, during peacetime, innumerable cases of violation were recorded in sources regarding these four aspects. Both the central government and the borderland local government were forced to deal with these incidents. But before moving onto a thorough scrutiny of borderland incidences, it is worth examining the immediate impact of the treaty on territorial demarcations.

Three months after the treaty was signed, a report was sent to Xiongzhou prefecture 雄州 from the local government of Rongcheng county 容城縣. The report said that the Khitans had crossed the border river the Juma River 拒馬河, and their chief asked for grasslands to graze.²⁷ Emperor Zhenzong replied,

There were many dual-tax-payers (those who pay taxes to both the Song and the Liao) households within the forty li between the Juma River and the Xiongzhou prefecture; however, the river bridge was built by the Xiongzhou prefecture, and the border marker has always been there, how can [these Khitans] cross the river and graze? They must rely on the fact the two states have made peace, and consider that there is no boundary. [We] can

²⁷ XCB, 1325.

immediately order the border officials to prepare diplomatic documents, list the words on the treaty, let the Khitan chiefs know them, and reprimand them.

Moreover, it is now the beginning of a friendly relation therefore more necessary to abide by rules rigorously. It must not be delayed.

拒馬河去雄州四十餘里，頗有兩地輸租民戶，然其河橋乃雄州所造，標立疆界素定，豈得輒渡河畜牧，此蓋恃已通和，謂無間阻，可亟令邊臣具牒，列誓書之言，使聞於首領，嚴加懲戒。況今歡好之始，尤宜執守，不可緩也。²⁸

From the emperor's response, we know that at least in Xiongzhou prefecture there were already border markers and copies of the treaty stored by local government so that when necessary they could show the violators the treaty provisions. From another case happened three months later, we know that the Liao also treated the border seriously. They sent diplomatic documents asking the Dingzhou prefecture to prohibit its people from crossing border and felling timber in Liao's territory. More interesting was the reaction from the Song government. After receiving documents from the Liao, Song local officials went to the place where border-crossings took place with the loggers, and set up border markers to inform them of the message. Along with them were border officials from the Liao side.²⁹ We can know from these cases that from the beginning of peacetime, both sides were starting to set up border markers at places where no natural barriers like rivers and mountains existed and inform their people not

²⁸ XCB, 1325.

²⁹ XCB, 1347.

to cross the border. Due to the fragmented nature of extant sources, it is hard to prove firmly that these activities were incessant ones, however, it is reasonable to believe that ever since the signing of the treaty both sides took great effort to establish and consolidate a mutually respected border.



Figure 1 Map of important prefectures at the Song-Liao border.

Chapter Three: New Institutions and Practices at the Song-Liao Border

Since the formal establishment of the Song-Liao border, many new institutions or old institutions with new responsibilities emerged to meet the need of a new era of Song-Liao relation. These changes were undertaken to achieve three objectives, (1) to set up a routine administrative system to deal with various issues and incidents at borderlands; (2) to re-establish and regulate the trade between the two states; (3) to consolidate and stabilize the borderlands.

A new Song administrative institution for dealing specifically with Liao is called the “Office of Diplomatic Correspondence” *guoxin suo* 國信所. This office was established in August 1007.³⁰ It was both a central and local institution.³¹ It oversaw the sending and receiving of diplomatic documents. It was also responsible for supervising the delivery of annual payments.

Three types of documents were invented to cope with different occasions in Song-Liao relation. The first type is affidavit or oath-deposition like the Treaty of Chanyuan, and later the Treaty of Qinli 慶曆誓書 or Guannan 關南誓書. The second type is called “national letter 國書”, oftentimes used for conveying good wishes on festivals, celebrating birthdays, or expressing condolences. The third type is called “regular diplomatic document 牒”, which was most frequently used when dealing with foreign

³⁰ XCB, 1478. See also Wang Yinglin 王應麟, *Yu hai* 玉海 (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1987), 2817.

³¹ Zhang, *Chanyuan zhi meng xinlun*, 415-417.

affairs. “Regular diplomatic documents” were used in (1) negotiating the delineation of border; (2) handling border-crossing incidents; (3) handling newly constructed fortifications; (4) handling smuggling business; and (5) mediating legal disputes.³²

The Song also set forth a preferential treatment for borderland civil service examinees to win the support of people who lived in the Song borderlands therefore consolidate its governance over borderlands. Borderland examinees were exonerated from prefectural level exams. There were also extra examination sites and other privileges for borderland examinees.³³

Some of these institutions were born from the beginning of peacetime, for instance, new government-supervised markets were set up to accommodate the growing need for trade and to prevent smuggling. Some were gradually invented to resolve new problems such as prohibiting the export of books, or the alteration of civil service examination standards to accommodate the need of borderland examinees. Apart from the previously mentioned institutions, this chapter focuses on some less discussed, but equally important if not more, borderland institutions to see how the Song-Liao border was routinely administrated and operated. Besides institutional changes, these new phenomena also reflect the reshaping of ideas and mentalities of the time.

³² Tao, *Song Liao Jin shi luncong*, 156-165.

³³ Zhang, *Chanyuan zhi meng xinlun*, 329-348.

Quechang Markets and Smuggling in Borderlands

Our discussion opens with the re-establishment of government-supervised markets, the Quechang. As introduced in the last chapter, trade between the Song and the Liao people was a continuous one, even during the war times. During Emperor Taizu's regime (960-976), the people of the Song and the Liao already did business with each other. But it was not until Emperor Tazong's regime (976-997) that regulating institutions were set up by government. Five markets in Zhenzhou 鎮州, Yizhou 易州, Xiongzhou 雄州, Bazhou 霸州, and Cangzhou 滄州 refectures were built up during the Emperor Taizong's regime. The products exchanged were mainly spice, rhinoceros' horns, ivories, and tea.³⁴

Horses were also among the merchandise list, though usually was the Song that bought horses from the Liao.³⁵ Due to the sensitive nature of horses as a resource for warfare, the Khitans were reluctant to trade horses. They have once requested to prohibit any more horse trading yet was rejected. As a retaliatory action, the Khitans plundered the tents that located west of Fengzhou prefecture 豐州.³⁶ During the war period, Quechang markets were closed, however, private trading between commoners and smuggling business still existed.

³⁴ XCB, 402.

³⁵ XCB, 471.

³⁶ XCB, 479.

Surprisingly, the Treaty of Chanyuan itself did not contain any agreements or regulations concerning inter-state trade. But not before long after the two states signed the treaty, on March 15th, 1005, the Song government reopened the markets in Xiongzhou, Bazhou, and Ansu prefectures 安肅軍.³⁷ They also sent diplomatic documents to the Liao stating that trading should be done in these markets and these markets only. The Song government adopted strict regulations on what may or may not be traded. On May 1st, various types of silk were banned from trading.³⁸

Apart from silk, books that are not the nine Classics or the annotation on the nine Classics were also banned³⁹. This was one of the earliest ban of exporting books recorded in the sources. As we shall see later in this chapter, the blockade of manuscripts and published books was a disparate phenomenon compared to earlier times. Nonetheless, Quechang markets were effective venues for the two states to trade, and more importantly to collect taxes. Therefore, more and more Quechang markets were established throughout the peacetime including Guangxin prefecture 廣信軍⁴⁰, Huoshan prefecture 火山軍, Jiuliangjin 九梁津 (久良津), Xincheng 新城, and Dongpiantou village 東偏頭村 (the latter two were in Liao's territory and administrated by

³⁷ XCB, 1315.

³⁸ XCB, 1325.

³⁹ XCB, 1425.

⁴⁰ Toghto 脫脫 et al., *Song shi* 宋史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977) [henceforth SS], 4562.

the LIAO).⁴¹ Goods that were bought and sold in these Quechang markets had also greatly expanded. Jewelries, silver, tin, copper coins, ginger, alum, and sackcloth were also on trading lists. Aside from text sources, archeological findings also reveal that Ding kiln porcelains were among the merchandises traded in Quechang markets.⁴² The amount and value of the items traded was astonishingly high. Therefore, many scholars estimate that most of the annual payment that the Song delivered to the Liao, through Quechang markets, returned to the Song.⁴³

In addition to Quechang markets, smuggling business was also thriving during peacetime. For the Song and the Liao government, Quechang markets were effective both in terms of exchanging goods and collecting taxes; however, for borderlands merchants, Quechang was more an obstacle for gaining profits rather than a beneficial channel. This is because the goods that could be legally traded at Quechang markets were limited while at the same time people from both states wished to trade more items hence gain as much profit as possible. Both inside markets and outside, people privately traded salt, books, and most importantly, tons and tons of copper coins. According to Su Zhe 蘇轍's memorials,

⁴¹ Zhang Liangcai 張亮采, "Song Liao jian de quechang maoyi 宋遼間的樵場貿易," *Dongbei shida xuebao: zhhexue shehui kexue ban* 東北師大學報：哲學社會科學版, 03 (1957): 149.

⁴² Zhang Liangcai, "Song Liao jian de quechang maoyi", 151. See also 馬端臨 Ma Duanlin, *Wenxian tong kao* 文獻通考 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2011), 441.

⁴³ Yu Wei, *Song shi*, 207. See also Zhang Liangcai, "Song Liao jian de quechang maoyi", 155.

We have observed that the North [Liao] does not have any currency, public and private trades, they all use copper coins of ours. Although the borderlands have rigorous laws to ban [the trade of copper] currencies; however, when there is profit [to gain] it is impossible to stop the trend. We forge millions of copper coins every year, but still worry about being lack of currency. This is because [all the currencies] are spread into foreign lands, then of course the trend is like this.

臣等竊見北界別無錢幣，公私交易，並使本朝銅錢。沿邊禁錢條法雖極深重，而利之所在，勢無由止。本朝每歲鑄錢以百萬計，而所在常患錢少，蓋散入四夷，勢當爾也。⁴⁴

Quechang markets, due to their limited numbers and rigorous regulations on tradable merchandise, satisfied only partial needs of the borderland populations. The border and Quechang markets were de facto restrains to a bigger flow of trade. In addition, some borderland areas belonged to the same regime before the co-existence of the Song and the Liao. Borderlands population may spoke the same language, had the same custom, hence maintained frequent communication. In that case, smuggling business, driven and sustained by borderland populations' need, was extremely difficult to prevent and existed throughout the peacetime that exceeds a hundred years between the Song and the Liao.

⁴⁴ Su Zhe 蘇轍, *Luancheng ji* 欒城集 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1987), 938.

Blockade of Manuscripts and Printed Books

As mentioned earlier, the Song government regulated that only the nine Classics and their annotations could legally be traded to the Liao in Quechang markets. This ban was reinstated in 1027,

The merchants who are active in the Hebei borderland Quechang markets often carry the literary collections of our officials and sell them to foreign states.

These collections recorded the information about gains and losses of the government, government institutions and borderland affairs. This is deeply troublesome. Therefore [we] ban it.

河北緣邊樵場商人往來，多以本朝臣僚文集傳鬻境外，其間載朝廷得失，或經制邊事，深為未便。故禁止之。⁴⁵

In 1078, Emperor Shenzong 宋神宗 announced again, after the first ban in 1006, that those who trade books other than Classics would be severely punished.⁴⁶ In fact, if the books contain information about borderland intelligence, even people from friendly states like Koryŏ were prevented from getting them⁴⁷. However, due to the almost unpreventable smuggling business, these bans had little real effect. From the Song envoy Su Zhe's observation, we know that Song publications were imported into the Liao in enormous quantity:

⁴⁵ XCB, 2436.

⁴⁶ XCB, 7068.

⁴⁷ XCB, 7379.

All the writings that have been carved into woodblocks, according to my estimate, are all circulating in the north. When I first arrived at Yanjing, deputy guard commander Xin Xigu welcomed and saw me off, he ordered Yuanxin to pass words and ask me, “your brother Su Shi’s *Meishan ji* has arrived here for a long time, why not you also print your own literary collection and let it spread here?” When arriving at Zhongjing, minister of revenue Zheng Zhuan held a feast, and said to me that my father Sun Xun’s writings can thoroughly tell the ins and outs of a story. When I arrived in front of the tent, reception staff Wang Shiru said to me, “I have heard that you often consume fuling (wolfiporia *extensa*), may I ask about the recipe?” This is probably because I have written the *Ode on Consuming Fuling* and it has also been circulated in the north. We therefore anticipate that most of our published books are being circulated in the Liao. Among them, there are possibly a lot of memorials and essays on politics written by scholar-officials and literati that discuss the gains and losses of the government, pros and cons on military affairs. In addition, common people are foolish and vulgar, they care only about profit, [therefore] they print bantering and joking words everywhere. If we let these books spread all over the north, on the top level our secret will be leaked, at the bottom level we will be mocked and laughed by the barbarians, these [consequences] are extremely unideal.

本朝民間開版印行文字，臣等竊料北界無所不有。臣等初至燕京，副留守邢希古相接送，令引接殿侍元辛傳語臣轍云：「令兄內翰〈謂臣兄軾。〉《眉山集》已到此多時，內翰何不印行文集，亦使流傳至此？」及至中京，度支使鄭顥押宴，為臣轍言：先臣洵所為文字中事跡，頗能盡其委曲。及至帳前，館伴王師儒謂臣轍：「聞常服茯苓，欲乞其方。」蓋臣轍嘗作《服茯苓賦》，必此賦亦已到北界故也。臣等因此料本朝印本文字，多已流傳在彼。其間臣僚章疏及士子策論，言

朝廷得失、軍國利害，蓋不為少。兼小民愚陋，惟利是視，印行戲謔之語，無所不至。若使盡得流傳北界，上則洩漏機密，下則取笑夷狄，皆極不便。⁴⁸

Despite the continuous effort to prohibit books from being sold to foreign states, especially the Liao, records show that from the beginning of the peacetime to the end Song publications were ubiquitous in the Liao. The attempt to make the border as a barrier to block the spread and circulation of information and knowledge had utterly failed. However, it is worth contemplating why the Song government took these bans seriously. The military pressure felt by the Song literati were unprecedentedly heavy. In many cases, the Liao people managed to acquire sensitive information concerning Song government and military movement through these publications. For instance, in 1053, envoy Fu Yongyan 傅永言 saw Song maps in Liao's yams.⁴⁹ It is potentially dangerous for the enemies, though in peacetime, to acquire too much confidential information so easily through book smuggling business. More importantly, it reflects a growing concern among Song literati about their civilization's superiority being taken over by those they usually called barbarians. The policy of blocking exports of manuscripts and printed books was one enacted at the border; however, it also mirrored a growing concern in the Song literati's mind that would later merge into their debates about orthodoxy and legitimacy.

⁴⁸ Su Zhe, *Luancheng ji*, 937.

⁴⁹ XCB, 4201.

Intelligence and Espionage

Although the peacetime between Song and Liao lasted for almost a hundred and twenty years, both states never relaxed their vigilance against each other. Prohibition on exporting books was one phenomenon revealing the distrust and vigilance between the two states. Apart from printed books, another, and more direct way of acquiring intelligence was through espionage. The Song-Liao border, where diplomacies and trade took place, and a hodgepodge of different people congregated, was the front line for information battles.

Institutions in charge of spying were set up in local borderland government. The Song government organized spies to secretly collect information from the north.⁵⁰ The earliest government-organized spying can be dated back to 1010.⁵¹ For the spies and borderland officials, their mission was described as below:

To acquire the information concerning the person in charge of military, their names, ability, characteristic, the number of soldiers that they command, their martial art skill, the location where forces station, the scale of fortresses, the amount of grain reserves, and the route forces march. When retrieved these information, [spies] should return and report them [to their superiors]. After comparing information from different spies, compile those that can be recognized as real into books, and prepare for using. Those border officials who

⁵⁰ XCB, 11637.

⁵¹ Tao, *Song Liao Jin shi luncong*, 194.

are incompetent [for doing these], especially those who sent spies and get false information, should be demoted.

探問敵中任事主兵人姓名、材能、性識、所管兵數、武藝強弱、屯泊處所、城壘大小、糧食多少及出兵道路，刺其的實，逐旋以聞。候到參互比較有實者，編類成書，准備照用。其邊臣不能，使人到前後探事尤無實者，當移降。⁵²

We even know the exact number of people in charge of recruiting, organizing, and writing pay check to spies in each borderland prefecture. For instance, there were four in Guangxin 廣信 and Shun'an prefecture 順安軍, three in Xiongzhou and Beiping prefecture 北平軍, seven in Bazhou, and six in Baozhou 保州 and Ansu prefecture.⁵³ Usually the Song spies were embassy staffs or commoners. Noticeably, almost all the spies, no matter whom they worked for, the Song or the Liao, were local Han Chinese. Since the Khitan people had different hairstyles and clothing, hence could be easily recognized, it is natural for Han people to serve as spies.

The reward for acquiring information about one thing was 2,000-3,000 wen. It seems that the reward for spotting and catching spies from the other side was much higher. In 1050, Zhang Yong 張用, Zhang Xian 張顯, and Wang Sheng 王昇 caught the Liao spy, a dual-tax area resident⁵⁴, Feng Jun 馮均. They were greatly rewarded and

⁵² XCB, 6258.

⁵³ XCB, 7267.

⁵⁴ About the dual-tax area and residents, see An Guolou, "Song Liao bianjing de 'liangshu hu'". See also Li Changxian, "Bei Song Hebei Xiongzhou de liangshu di".

appointed as officials. On the other hand, the Liao spy Feng was sentenced to death.⁵⁵

Like Feng Jun, most of the spies detected and caught by the opposing state were executed. In 1073, a Liao spy called Wang Qian 王千 was beheaded, and his family was taken into custody in Tanzhou prefecture 潭州.⁵⁶ Luckier were those who managed to escape before the exposure of their undercover identities, they were normally rewarded monetarily and appointed to a government post. In 1027, Zhang Wenzhi 張文質 fulfilled his job and return to Song, later he was appointed to an official.⁵⁷ In 1054, Li Xiu 李秀, a commoner in Yizhou, was employed as a spy by the government of Xiongzhou prefecture. He was turned in by another Song borderland commoner who sneaked into Liao. Li somehow managed to escape before being caught. He was then granted a government post.⁵⁸ Similar cases can be found throughout peacetime. From these cases, though lacking direct evidence, we may conclude that, at least for Song (very likely for Liao as well), a reward system designed for retired agents or exposed agents managed to escape has already been set up. The rewards consist of financial rewards, lands, and government posts.

Both the Song and Liao spies took on various identities when carrying out their missions. Records show that some Song spies even managed to penetrate the

⁵⁵ XCB, 4037.

⁵⁶ XCB, 5952-5953.

⁵⁷ XCB, 2447.

⁵⁸ XCB, 4272.

government. The above-mentioned Zhang Wenzhi was once appointed a government post in Liao's court. Liang Qishi 梁濟世 has even taught Khitan princes *the Classic of Odes* and *the Book of Documents*.⁵⁹ Another identity was monk. In 1054, the Liao sent people from Weizhou 蔚州, Yingzhou 應州, Wuzhou 武州, and Shuozhou 朔州 prefectures to Wutai Mountain 五台山 to become Song monks in order to make secret enquiries. As a counter measure, Song government later required guarantors for anyone who wished to become a monk in borderlands.⁶⁰

The Song government quickly set up a new government department at the border to run its espionage activities. An institution that recruited, trained, organized, and rewarded spies was established. Although we do not know whether the Liao created its own spy system, due to limited sources, it is certain that they also sent spies to the Song territory. The information battle that took place at the border was an important new phenomenon which shows the continuing tension between the two states even in peacetime.

⁵⁹ XCB, 6322.

⁶⁰ XCB, 4283.

Chapter Four: Border-Crossing Incidents and Foreign Policies

Border-Crossings Incidents

In 1044, a Khitan consort prince called Liu Sangu 劉三嘏, disgusted by his wife's prurience, fled to the Song and hid in Dingzhou prefecture 定州. The Liao officials sent several documents urging the Song government to return their consort prince. Ministers and advisors at court, including Ouyang Xiu 歐陽脩, suggested that Song government should keep him in order to obtain confidential information about the Liao. However, Emperor Renzong 仁宗 was persuaded by Du Yan 杜衍's argument of respecting the treaty. He decided to send Liu back.⁶¹ This is perhaps the most famous case of border-crossing in the Northern Song, involving a distinguished imperial consort prince and an eminent official.

Ouyang Xiu's view was not in the minority, in fact, many other ministers also suggested that Liu was a valuable source. The dispute over how to treat Liu reveals that the treaty agreement to repatriate fugitives, though held some currency here (after all Du Yan's advice was taken by the Emperor), considered by many as a mere scrap of paper that bounds no one if pros exceeded cons. If such were the case for more "valuable" people, what can we know about more ordinary people, especially the borderland population, at the time?

⁶¹ XCB, 3707.

Clearly Liu knowingly fled to the Song territory to escape the jurisdiction and authority of the Liao. He had even reached out and established an unofficial relationship with the local prefectural magistrate in Guangxin prefecture 廣信軍.⁶² This chapter categorizes border-crossing cases like this as intentional trespassing.

Trespassers knew that a border separated the territories and political authorities. A conscious motive backed their border-crossing activities. Bandits and criminals who intended to run away from either side's jurisdiction and their punishment, officials who changed their allegiance and sought protection from the other side, and spies who engaged in espionage all belong to this category.

While there can be no doubt that these border-crossings deserve scholars' attention, what this chapter emphasizes is unintentional trespassing. These ordinary people had neither served in the militia nor the government. From their cases of border-crossing, we may find out how common borderland populations conceived the border. My argument is that although the Chanyuan treaty conspicuously drew a line between the territories of the Song and the Liao, a line most certainly recognized by officials, generals, and soldiers, and in most cases respected by them, ordinary border population who were driven by practical need oftentimes neglected and trespassed the border. Various activities were conducted on these lands, including grazing, logging, farming, fishing, hunting, opening shops and transporting salt on the border river 拒馬河. This

⁶² XCB, 3707.

chapter presents some of the most representative cases; however, these were by no means the only cases during the long peacetime between the Song and the Liao. It is reasonable to imagine that those recorded border-crossing cases were only the tip of an iceberg for that many others were not detected, or not significantly enough to be even mentioned in official records.

In 1005, the same year when the Chanyuan treaty was signed, the border prefecture Xiongzhou received reports from the Rongcheng county, stating that the Khitans were detected grazing south of the border river.⁶³ As the first case observable in extant sources, there are several interesting facts worth noticing. First, a border marker had already existed along with the bridge across the border river, a clear evidence that not long after the treaty was signed, some signals were established to remind people from both sides of a territorial demarcation. Second, after receiving Xiongzhou's report, the emperor gave a clear order to border officials that they ought to display copies of the treaty to those who violated it. Border officials obviously kept treaty copies at their local offices. The same year in June, Dingzhou prefecture received documents from the Liao, asking the Song border officials to regulate logging by the Song subjects within the Song's territory.⁶⁴ This issue was resolved by officials and loggers from both sides, the Song and the Liao, arriving at the scene and setting up border sign together.

⁶³ XCB, 1325.

⁶⁴ XCB, 1347.

Hunting was also among these unintentional border-crossings. Unlike cases mentioned above, this one was a rumor reported by Lu Wan 廬琬, who speculated that that Khitans intended to hunt along the border river. Even though the emperor was not entirely convinced that the Khitans would contravene the agreements, he still decreed that if such a case should happen, border officials should send documents to the Liao, and request them to abide by the treaty.⁶⁵

Notably, these cases all happened within the year Chanyuan treaty was signed. Nonetheless, among many agreements of the treaty, the border was enforced rigorously from the beginning. Ways to deal with border-crossing incidents caused by ordinary people, at this stage, mainly consist of three responses: 1) sending border-crossers back to their own side; 2) clearer markers and signs at the border or copies of the treaty that served as a warning or reminder to avoid similar cases in future; and 3) official documents exchanged between border officials from both sides.⁶⁶ A standard procedure to deal with border incidents gradually took shape and consolidated following the pattern inaugurated at the beginning of Song-Liao peacetime.

If it was quite normal to see border-crossing incidents when the border was just introduced, did things change, especially as making clearer border markers by both oral and physical means was integrated into the solving formula, afterward? Cases

⁶⁵ XCB, 1430.

⁶⁶ A more detailed account on diplomatic documents exchanged between the Song and the Liao see Tao, *Song Liao Jin shi luncong*, 133-181.

documented in the mid-11th century show persistent border-crossing by both Khitans and the Song subjects. In 1057, the Liao envoy Xiao Hu 蕭扈 accused farmers from Wuyang village 武陽寨 and Tianchi temple 天池廟 for encroaching on the farmlands of the Liao. An investigation conducted by the Song proved that it was in fact the Liao farmers who encroached. Later the Song court sent a diplomat with maps and informed the complete story about the farmlands dispute.⁶⁷ Although this is a rare case that was not solved by border officials but by the central government, it nonetheless showed that even fifty years later, these incidents were still happening, and the way to solve them remained unchanged. Five years later, the magistrate of prefecture Daizhou 代州 Liu Yongnian 劉永年 reported that the Khitans were logging in the Song territory, some even extended into mountains a dozen miles within the Song's border.⁶⁸

Despite the persistent efforts by border officials for decades, trespassing by ordinary people still seemed to be inevitable. Due to the lack of details concerning each case, it is almost impossible to know the exact reason why the borderland population continuously trespassed borderlines; however, a reasonable guess is that borderland populations who did farming, grazing, logging, transporting and so forth to make a living were bound to trespass when there was no obvious border markers for them to identify the border. The gap between ministerial will and reality is a telling

⁶⁷ SHYJG, 9748. See also XCB, 4462.

⁶⁸ XCB, 4762.

phenomenon from which we may imagine and deduct what a pre-modern border looked like, especially when the concept of the border is less significant after the Song until the mid-18th century.

A Standard Procedure and Radical Reactions

As shown in some of the cases mentioned above, a standard formula already took its basic form. First, except for a few cases, border-crossing incidents by ordinary people were solved locally. Both the Song and the Liao border officials, after receiving reports, sent out clerks and sometimes small troops to persuade, chase back, or repatriate trespassers. Later, diplomatic documents were exchanged between borderland prefectures to inform the other side. There was no bloodshed and no quarrel in the borderlands, and little impact has caused outside the borderlands. These peaceful, careful, and perhaps most importantly uncontroversial treatments helped to ensure a peacetime that lasted nearly 120 years between the Song and the Liao. However, this picture was by no means an exclusive picture of the borderlands. Occasionally, some border officials took radical, controversial, and even revengeful actions against trespassers. In the case of logging in Daizhou, Liu Yongnian ordered an incineration of the forest frequently logged by the Khitans. When questioned by the Liao official to capture the culprits, Liu simply replied that the fire took place within the Song territory,

therefore, it was none of the Liao's business.⁶⁹ A tough response, yet the Khitans were unable to make any more protest. It seems that whether officials took a radical decision or not mostly depended on the individual personality since in another case of Liu took a similar approach. In 1065, when reports came in that the Khitans opened shops surpassing their territory, Liu appealed to the central government for the permission to send troops to declare sovereignty, a contradiction to routine treatment of similar case. Naturally, the request was rejected by the emperor.⁷⁰

It is hard to find out the emperor's attitude towards Liu's rather rash actions since commendation was given to Liu in 1062 while his request got rejected in 1065. A reasonable guess would be in the first case, the Khitans did not know for sure if it was Liu who sent people to burn the forest. Therefore, the allocation of responsibility was unclear. Furthermore, the fire did not result in any real casualty. In contrast, moving troops was always potentially explosive and could lead to unpredictable conflicts. The emperor was cautious not to intensify small disputes. Feeble though it might seem, the standard procedure was preferable in most cases. Nevertheless, the tension between a conservative, evasive way that avoided escalating an incident to a greater conflict, and an aggressive response that shows a stronger and tougher attitude towards encroachment always existed throughout the whole peacetime. This was best

⁶⁹ XCB, 4762.

⁷⁰ SHYJG, 9749.

demonstrated by the persistent dispute over fishing in the border river. This dispute offers us the opportunity to see how a minor incident at the border can arouse heated debates at court. It mirrored many Song scholar-officials' standpoint on foreign policy. Debates caused by the dispute, in turn, shaped future policy making.

Border River Fishing Incidents and Foreign Policy Debates

Among all types of border-crossing incidents in the period, border river fishing was certainly the most frequent and well-documented one. According to the treaty, the Juma River is a natural demarcation of Song-Liao territories. Consequently, it is also called the border river. A year after the treaty was signed, in 1006, both the Song and the Liao put a ban on fishing in the border river. The Liao officials even punished its own subjects for violating the ban and informed the Song about their disposal.⁷¹ These bans were repeatedly promulgated; however, the situation drastically deteriorated because of an incident happened in 1061. As time passed, the Khitans gradually neglected the ban, many started to fish or reap reed along the border river. Some even transported salt from the estuary to its hinterlands. While former magistrates did nothing about these, the new border official Zhao Zi 趙滋 took a surprising action to send soldiers to kill the Khitan fishermen and destroyed their ships.⁷² Regrettably, we

⁷¹ XCB, 1418.

⁷² XCB, 4671-4672.

do not have sources from the Liao side to see how their border officials reacted to this rather bold action, except for their routine treatment of exchanging diplomatic document.⁷³ What we do know with certainty is that such a case was severe enough to stir debate and reverberate at the Song court where foreign policy was made.

Sima Guang 司馬光 was among those who strongly opposed Zhao's disposal of border incidents. In 1065, in a memorial sent to Emperor Yingzong 英宗, when discussing northern and northwest border threats, he criticized Zhao for his imprudence when dealing with "minor events at borderlands like fishing in the border river or cutting down willow trees south of the River Bai 白溝"⁷⁴. Though Sima Guang by no means considered that minor incidents like this could directly trigger military conflicts, he did worry that actions like this (and getting rewards for doing so) might create a dangerous precedence that encouraged other border officials to follow.⁷⁵ It was simply not worth jeopardizing the peaceful situation that lasted for over sixty years for displaying one's ability or loyalty. No doubt this was the view of many other elder statesmen, for instance, Hu Su 胡宿 expressed a similar viewpoint, "ever since Zhao Zi's action, more and more conflicts happened between the Liao and us ... this country has enjoyed peace for over a hundred years and maintained a peaceful relationship with its

⁷³ SS, 10497.

⁷⁴ XCB, 4969.

⁷⁵ XCB, 4969. See also Zhao Ruyu 趙汝愚, *Songchao zhucheng zouyi* 宋朝諸臣奏議 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1999), 1522.

enemy for more than sixty years ... a routine exchange of diplomatic documents is good enough, why bother employing military actions to deal with (small incidents)?”⁷⁶ Regardless of the intensified factional dispute at the time, many ministers all expressed similar opinions, for instance, Wang Anshi 王安石, Fu Bi 富弼, Han Qi 韓琦, and Zeng Gongliang 曾公亮, who recommend the appointment of Zhao Zi in the first place, all advocated a pacificatory policy.⁷⁷ Objections increased so much so that Peng Siyong 彭思永, Tang Jie 唐介, and Yandu 燕度 impeached him.⁷⁸ Curiously, against all the objections and ministers’ will, Zhao Zi was promoted and continued to serve as a border official in other borderland prefectures until his death. A puzzling decision was made at the end since in most other cases the emperor seemed to discourage contentious treatments of border-crossing incidents. The case was settled for Zhao Zi, however, the incidents of border river fishing continued to happen. In the fourth month of 1072, despite the bloodshed spilled by their predecessors, fishermen were again spotted on the border river. And imaginably, these incidents would continue to happen throughout the later decades of the peacetime.

⁷⁶ Hu Su 胡宿, *Wengong ji* 文恭集. *Yingyin Wenyuange Siku quanshu* ed., 8.6a-8.7b. See also SS: 10368.

⁷⁷ Tao, *Song Liao Jin shi luncong*, 235.

⁷⁸ SS, 10368.

Conclusion

The scrutiny on various types of border-crossing incidents depicts a much more complicated picture of the border, theoretically rigorous, perhaps even “modern”, yet in reality often neglected by ordinary borderlands population. A standard procedure was developed and employed to deal with these incidents. Border officials from both sides handled disputes with caution. Nonetheless, there were always anomalies that broke the rule. This chapter pays special attention to the persistent disputes over border river fishing. They not only provide detailed examples of border-crossing incidents which reflect the real picture of the border, they also open a window on the Song emperors and ministers’ attitude and strategy of foreign policy.

From the perspective of borderland populations, sometimes they were aware of the border because of border markers, government’s notices, or clear natural barriers like mountains, rivers, and marshes. Sometimes, the border was an imagined one that could hardly be perceived. Nonetheless, in both scenarios, borderland populations, due to economic reasons, crossed the border to conduct activities like farming, logging, grazing, and smuggling. And when border officials found out about these incidents, they had to deal with them. Therefore, we see a standard procedure was created, however, it was not always the choice made by some officials as they reacted more aggressively. At court, we see a tension between two opposing attitudes towards radical actions when dealing with border-crossing incidents. One was trying the best to avoid

conflicts, sometimes even at the price of small sacrifices. The other called for tougher, more aggressive, and controversial actions. The emperors seemed to keep a balance between these two disparate attitudes.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

In 1005, after an almost drawn military conflict, the Song and the Liao signed the monumental treaty known as the Treaty of Chanyuan. As a direct product of the treaty, the Song-Liao border came into effect. The previously loose and ambiguous demarcation of territories, sometimes even changeable according to shifting allegiance of powerful individuals such as military commanders, was replaced by a much more rigorous one that both the Song and the Liao sworn oaths to maintain. These oaths also served as rules that regulated how the border should function. In brief, fugitives must be repatriated, farmlands should not be encroached, and no new fortifications or canals can be built. Immediately after the signing of the treaty, both states made an effort to consolidate the border.

Not before long, new institutions and practices were invented to maintain the peace at the border. These innovations covered various issues that could happen in borderlands. The “Office of Diplomatic Correspondence” was established, both in the central government and along the border, to cope with the Liao. Three types of diplomatic documents were designed for communication in different occasions. In order to win the support and loyalty of borderland population, a preferential treatment for borderland civil service examinees was introduced by the Song. Throughout the peacetime, government-supervised Quechang markets for trade were re-opened. At the

same time, smuggling business also thrived since goods tradable in markets were strictly limited and regulated.

Threatened by its northern neighbor, the Song government also initiated the blockade of books into the Liao. Only a small number of books were lawful to be export to the Liao, as well as other states. In fact, through smuggling business, Song books were found everywhere. In the Song court, an anxiety of losing its cultural superiority was raising.

Despite of the relative peace between the Song and the Liao, the border was a silent battleground for intelligence. Both states established institutions to recruit and dispatch spies to acquire their opponent's information. A corresponding reward system was created simultaneously.

All the above-mentioned phenomena tell us that the border was at the same time "solid" and "permeable"; however, the most outstanding and telling phenomenon was the border-crossing incident. Driven by economic reasons and practical needs, the border was often neglected and trespassed by ordinary people. Border officials were responsible for handling these matters. When they occasionally took unconventional approach, the seemingly insignificant disturbances could possibly turn into issues for serious debates, henceforth had an impact on future policy making.

Abbreviations

For complete bibliographic data on the following works, see the Bibliography.

SHYJG	Xu Song, ed., <i>Song huiyao jigao</i>
SS	Toghto et al., eds., <i>Song shi</i>
XCB	Li Tao, <i>Xu zizhi tongjian changbian</i>

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